

## *Virtual Mentor*

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### VIEWPOINT

#### Medical Trivia

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- Sir William Osler's middle name was Bart [1].
- Van Gogh's melancholy portrait of his physician, Dr. Gachet, was purchased in May 1990 for about \$120 million, the highest price ever paid for a painting. Concerns about the painting's whereabouts surfaced after the Japanese owner died in 1996. The painting is reported to have been purchased by an anonymous US buyer who has no plans to display it [2].
- Total blood volume in a human being recirculates every 13 seconds.
- A bacterium entering a cut finger can reach the lungs in under 4 seconds.
- Lazaro Spallanzani, an Italian priest and physiologist, put diapers on male frogs to keep any released sperm from contact with the female's eggs and thereby proved that physical mingling of sperm and egg was necessary for fertilization to occur. Spallanzani also considered the possibility of preserving human semen in a frozen state for later use.
- Thomas Aquinas, the preeminent theologian, philosopher, and *Angelicus Doctor* of the Roman Catholic Church, was so quiet as a child that fellow students considered him dim-witted and called him the Dumb Ox [3].

#### References

1. Swartz BJ. Sir William Osler. UMDNJ and Coriell Research Library. Accessed August 26, 1999.
2. Cezzane to Van Gogh: the collection of Doctor Gachet. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Available at: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Accessed August 26, 1999.
3. St Thomas Aquinas. *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Accessed August 26, 1999.

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